

Community *Contact*

Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs

March
2007

*For and
About Local
Government
Development*

Flood Planning Today to
Prepare for Tomorrow

2

First Steps in Building
Your Community's
Emergency Plan

4

Take Your Best Shots

6

The New Manitoba
Northern Affairs Act

8

The Pas Welcomes New
Canadian Red Cross Office

9

Community Public Works
Employee Workshop Review

10

Responsibilities and Duties
of a Public Works Employee

11

ANA Employee Recognition
Program Awards


11

Profile

12



The Canadian-made Amphibex excavator breaks up ice jams near Waterhen in November 2006 to help reduce flooding.

Manitoba 

This Issue

Welcome to the March 2007
Community Contact Newsletter.

The theme for this issue is public works. In the past, we have featured public works related articles but we haven't looked closely at the roles public works employees play in a community. We feature an article on the roles and duties of a public works employee and highlight two recent training workshops held in Thompson and Selkirk for these employees.

To take advantage of the timing of this issue, we have included a couple of articles on flood prevention planning and one on emergency plans. The articles on flood prevention provide guidance and reference materials for communities to assist them in preparing for potential spring flooding. Provincial legislation and recent events in Aboriginal and Northern Affairs communities highlight the need for well developed community emergency plans. This can often be difficult for communities so we have also included an article on the first steps in building an emergency plan.

We often like to feature photos to go along with our articles. At times, it can be difficult finding a picture related to an article or one where the readers can identify what is being shown in the picture. To help address this issue, on pages 6 and 7, we invite our readers to "Take Your Best Shots." We want to see your best photos showing the people, events and sights from your community. If we use one of your photos to illustrate an article in a future issue of Community Contact, we'll be sure you and your community receive appropriate credit.

Also in this issue we feature some information on a recent Red Cross office opening in The Pas, Manitoba, we name Employee Recognition Award recipients and we profile new additions to our department staff.

Enjoy this issue and please contact us with your comments, pictures and article suggestions, or to request additional copies.

Flood Planning



A community-owned public works building is surrounded by floodwaters at Red Deer Lake in spring, 2006.

In a potential flood situation, there is often sufficient pre-planning time to lessen effects on a community. But a flash flood may occur so suddenly, a community may not be able to prepare itself.

A written flood plan should be completed well in advance of any anticipated flooding. This flood plan recognizes the possible major effects of a flood on the community and lists resources and systems required to manage an actual flood incident. The plan should be able to handle a flood that is expected or one that arrives without warning. The plan should also describe the roles of local, provincial and federal governments and advise how citizens can help during a flood.

In Canada, emergency preparedness philosophy expects that everyone knows what emergencies might affect

them personally and expects them to make personal plans to protect themselves. This flows from the fact that everyone is responsible for their own basic needs such as personal safety, food, clothing and housing. It is therefore expected that individual homeowners will be the first to take action to protect their own property.

If the job is too big for a homeowner to handle alone, then the next level of assistance is the community. If community resources are exhausted, the next level of support is the provincial government. If the provincial government requires assistance, they call on the federal government. In Manitoba, *The Emergency Measures Act* requires every local authority to have an emergency plan in place to protect life, property and the environment, to the best of their ability, for the greater good of all.

Today to Prepare for Tomorrow

This information will help your community prepare for and respond to a flood.

Possible Major Effects

- o threat to life and property
- o utility failure – power, water, gas, sewer and telephone outages
- o environmental and rail/road accidents, contaminated water/dangerous goods accidents
- o severe structural damage or river bank erosion
- o traffic disruption – stranded motorists, road/bridge/rail closures
- o isolation of communities, homes, farms and livestock
- o difficulties in attaining and delivering emergency services – fire, police and ambulance
- o food and water shortages
- o evacuation or reception of people and livestock
- o crop damage
- o threat to public health

Resources

Resources that may be used in a flood are listed here. Many of these may be rented or purchased. The citizens of your community may wish to know where to buy or rent these goods.

- o sand and gravel
- o sandbags
- o front end loaders, bulldozers, backhoes
- o pumps
- o lighting equipment, floodlights, flashlights
- o rope
- o walkie-talkies (with spare batteries)
- o barricades
- o livestock trucks, dump trucks, pickup trucks, buses
- o rubber boots, rain wear
- o hip waders, work gloves
- o shovels
- o generators

- o polyethylene sheeting
- o wire (baling)
- o portable toilets
- o boats, motors, canoes, life jackets, paddles, flares
- o lumber, plywood, hammers, nails, extension cords
- o first aid kits
- o drinking water
- o portable heaters
- o skilled and qualified people

References and More Sources of Information

1. *Authorities – The Emergency Measures Act* – can be found at web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/e080e.php.
2. *Written emergency plan for flooding* – assistance can be obtained from your regional Aboriginal and Northern Affairs representative and Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization (EMO). See regional EMO map and contact info at www.gov.mb.ca/emo/regions.html.
3. *How to get a surveyed measuring device installed in your community to measure increase/decrease of water levels* – talk to your local Aboriginal and Northern Affairs rep who will work with Water Stewardship.
4. *Flood reports* – are produced in the spring commencing the last Friday in February of each year. They are distributed by Alf Warkentin, the provincial flood forecaster. You can receive these reports at no cost by simply calling 204-945-6698 or e-mailing Alfred.Warkentin@gov.mb.ca.
5. *Sandbag dyke construction* – visit the EMO website for illustrations at: www.gov.mb.ca/emo/pubinfo/dyke.html.
6. *Incident command system* – most fire departments have received this training so your fire chief would be a local source. Incident command training can be obtained from the Manitoba Emergency Services College free via the Internet at www.firecomm.gov.mb.ca/mesc_student_precourse_ics.html.
7. *Emergency operations centre* – training is done by Manitoba EMO. For information contact your regional EMO rep at www.gov.mb.ca/emo/regions.html.

Building a Sandbag Dike

Not all sandbags or dikes are created equal. Some fail with disastrous results. These basic guidelines can help you do a better job in a pinch. Whenever possible, seek out a qualified authority to provide proper advice and training.

How to fill and lap sandbags:

- o Sandbags should be half full of sand, clay or silt.
- o The base area of the sandbag dike construction should be clear of snow or ice before you begin to build.
- o To create a more secure dike, whenever possible, create a trench in the soil that is one sandbag deep by two sandbags wide.
- o Leave at least 2.5 metres to three metres (about eight to 10 feet) between the dike and any building. This will allow you to increase the height of the dike if water levels continue to rise.
- o Tying or sewing sandbags closed is not necessary if appropriate construction techniques are observed.
- o If untied bags are used, the unfilled portion of the bag should be stretched lengthwise and the next bag placed on top of it. This method is known as lapping.
- o The bottom layer of bags on the river side will run parallel with the river with the open tops of the bags should face downstream.
- o Use six-millimetre polyethylene sheets in three metre wide rolls as waterproofing on the river side of the dike.
- o Have extra sandbags on hand to strengthen any weak spots in the dike.
- o Use a foot to tamp properly placed sandbags firmly into place.
- o Alternate direction of each sandbag placed (lengthwise then crosswise) to avoid leaving cracks where water can seep straight through.

A dike must be extremely strong to hold back hundreds of thousands of litres in a flooding river. Sometimes, no matter how well you build a dike, extreme water pressure will cause the dike to seep or water to bubble up through the ground. If seeping occurs, this may not be a serious problem, but the dike should be monitored closely and a qualified engineer should be consulted if available.

Sandbag Removal

When removing sandbags from a dike, safety and health concerns are important. Whether or not the sandbags have been exposed to flood waters, they should be removed with the same precautions.

- o Wear protective clothing, rubber boots and work gloves.
- o Keep any open sores or wounds covered and dry, do not expose to content of the sandbags.
- o Take frequent rest breaks.
- o Thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water after removing clothes used to dismantle the dike.

Sand from the sandbags should not be used for children's sand boxes or playground areas. The sand may contain microbial contamination from the flood waters or the grade of sand may not be uniform and may contain fine dust that could blow in the wind and harm children in playgrounds. Sand from the bags may be used for landscaping purposes without posing a health concern.

FIRST in Building

Encouraging development of safe, stable communities is a primary goal for government. An environment where people feel secure is a starting point that can lead to growth and prosperity.

The *Emergency Measures Act* requires all local authorities in Manitoba to have an emergency plan that meets requirements set by Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization (EMO). Manitoba EMO works closely with Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) to provide guidance and support in developing community-level emergency preparedness and to develop a broader framework for managing large-scale emergencies.

So where should you start? One of the hardest challenges in developing an emergency plan is identifying how to begin and what the objectives are.



STEPS

Your Community's Emergency Plan

Starting Points

Manitoba uses an all hazards approach to emergency preparedness, with a focus on the consequences of an emergency before the cause. It doesn't matter if you need to evacuate because of a flood, a fire or a chemical spill – the things you need to do are the same. All-hazard emergency planning provides a flexible outline for emergency response, modified as needed, depending on the crisis.

It's also important to understand that emergency management is a community-level responsibility. Local authorities in Canada are responsible for the primary management of an emergency. For ANA communities, that means operations jointly managed by the department and the community council. While there are provincial and federal resources available,

use them only when you can't find resources in your community. Once resources are made available, it doesn't change the responsibility of the local authority to continue managing the emergency.

Elements of your Emergency Plan

Emergency preparedness shouldn't be thought of as a project. It doesn't have an end date, it doesn't have a finish line and it isn't ever completed. At the minimum, your emergency plan should include:

- o contact information for key people
- o risk assessment and hazard analysis information that identifies priority concerns
- o training requirements
- o resources available in your community, how they can be accessed, and how they will be accounted for
- o activation procedures for using the emergency plan
- o public information guidelines to deal with the media and public
- o emergency operations centre requirements, facilities and responsibilities. This includes a chain-of-command and decision-making process.
- o emergency social services for basic necessities like food, shelter and lodging
- o transportation resources
- o evacuation guidelines, including communities that will host your residents and guidelines for registration and accountability
- o finance and administration to track costs and authorize expenditures
- o contact information for requesting help from ANA or other agencies
- o an exercise schedule to test and update your plan

Support

Manitoba EMO has an emergency officer assigned to every community in the province. Emergency officers are valuable resources for plan writing, exercises and training. You can contact them directly or through Manitoba EMO toll free at 1-888-267-8298.

EMO Emergency Officer for ANA Communities:

Jean Champagne
Phone: 204-627-8288 • Fax: 204-945-4620
Cell: 204-782-1279
Website: manitobaemo.ca
E-mail: jean.champagne@gov.mb.ca

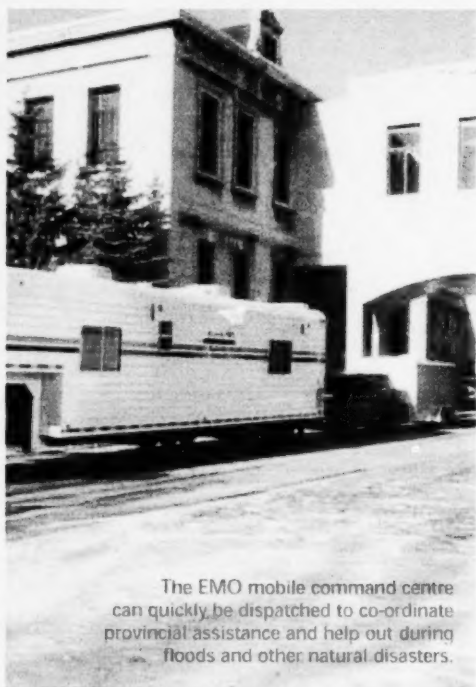
ANA Protective Service Consultant (Northern Region):

Garry Nabess
Phone: 204-677-6790 • Fax: 204-677-6525
E-mail: garry.nabess@gov.mb.ca

ANA Protective Service Consultant (North Central Region):

Hessel Dethmers
Phone: 204-622-2150 • Fax: 204-677-6525
E-mail: hessel.dethmers@gov.mb.ca

The National Fire Prevention Association's NFPA 1600 Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs is gaining wide acceptance by the emergency management community and has been endorsed and adopted by a number of agencies in Canada and the United States. NFPA 1600 provides excellent guidance for municipalities or communities building on current emergency plans. Download the 2007 edition at no cost from the NFPA website by copying the link www.nfpa.org/assets/files//PDF/CodesStandards/1600-2007.pdf into your browser.



The EMO mobile command centre can quickly be dispatched to co-ordinate provincial assistance and help out during floods and other natural disasters.

Take Your

Community Contact wants photos from your community. We invite you to participate as we develop a catalogue of photos showing the people, the events and the sights from Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) communities.

Show us your community's culture and history. Give us a visual idea of where you live and what makes it special for you. Do you live by a lake, on the top of a hill or in a valley by a stream? Do you have a place where people gather? Is there some aspect of your community that gave it its name? How do people make a living in your town? What do visitors see first when they arrive and what would you like them to remember most? What would you show people of other Northern Affairs communities about yours?

Send us your best photographs. We'll make a selection for use in *Community Contact* to represent life in remote and northern Manitoba communities. We'd particularly like to see photos from these categories:

- o cultural images – people or things with special meaning or representing life in your community
- o community landmarks – buildings, recognizable landmarks or scenic views of your community
- o community events – special events, ceremonies or community sporting events
- o traditional activities – photos that represent the traditional heritages of people in your community
- o work related – pictures that illustrate the livelihood of people in your community and the surrounding area

All people whose photos are used in *Community Contact* newsletter will receive recognition. Photos can be submitted in electronic form (minimum 500 kilobytes each) or as traditional printed photos (minimum 4" X 5"). If you mail prints, please pack them carefully, we cannot be responsible for their loss or damage in the mail.

When you send in your photos, number them and tell us who or what each photo is about. If you send them electronically, describe them in your e-mail. If you send them as prints, enclose a separate sheet describing the contents of the photos and when they were taken. If you send us pictures of recognizable people, make sure you know who they are and how to contact them for a photo release if we decide to print the photo.

E-mail submissions to:

paul.doolan@gov.mb.ca

Mail photos to:

Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs,
Program Planning and Development
Bay 8 - 1680 Ellice Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3H 0Z2

Please be sure to let us know how we can contact you.

Questions? Telephone Paul Doolan at 204-945-2161.



Best Shots

Send them to us and boast about your community!



Photos of the community of Brochet (top), the Matheson Island 2007 fishing derby (lower left) and the ferry at South Indian Lake (lower right) were taken by ANA staff. Show us what you can do.



The New Manitoba Northern Affairs Act

Frequently Asked Questions about Community Incorporation

On December 7, 2006, the Manitoba Legislature passed Bill C33 to redraft The Northern Affairs Act. The act was proclaimed January 1, 2007. Community Contact asked Darrell McKenzie of Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) to help outline some of the features of the act and explain how it affects people of Aboriginal and northern Manitoba communities covered by its legislation.

Darrell is the North Central Region municipal development consultant based in the Winnipeg office of ANA. For this issue of *Community Contact*, he prepared answers to questions he is frequently asked about community incorporation and how it is affected by the revised legislation.

What happens when a Northern Affairs community incorporates?

When a Northern Affairs community incorporates, it takes on status as a legal entity under *The Northern Affairs Act*. Incorporation is a progressive step that allows the community council opportunities to assume more local authority and control in the administration of local government affairs. Councils or administrators in unincorporated communities are only able to advise the ANA minister on their community's needs.

Are there benefits to incorporating?

As a legal entity, a Northern Affairs community council has the authority to negotiate with other parties and enter into agreements under their community's corporate name. This can create new opportunities to enhance the social, economic, environmental and organizational well being of the community. It also allows the council to be far more responsive to their citizens than any other level of government ever could be. All citizens can benefit when they have a greater voice in governing their community.

Can a Community Council do whatever it wants once the community incorporates?

Incorporation allows more decisions to be made locally, but local councils must still operate within the authority provided by *The Northern Affairs Act* and other applicable federal or provincial statutes and regulations. This is similar in many ways to larger incorporated Manitoba communities whose administration falls under *The Municipal Act*.

Does ANA abandon the community if it incorporates?

ANA will not abandon a community upon incorporation. The department will continue to support the incorporated community council by providing operating funds according to an established funding formula. It will also continue to provide technical consulting services to the community council for the operation and maintenance of municipal services.

What if the community requires additional help during the process of incorporation?

ANA is committed to helping communities through the process of incorporating. During initial phases, an outside consultant will be available to help the community complete required startup tasks. The community may also be offered extra funding needed to train administrative staff to handle new duties successfully.

How does community incorporation affect funding from ANA?

All communities administered under *The Northern Affairs Act*, including incorporated communities, receive formula-based funding for operations and maintenance. In fact, incorporated communities receive additional funding for insurance, legal fees and economic development. Incorporated communities also remain eligible to apply for ANA capital funding for municipal projects.

How do we know we are ready to incorporate?

ANA has developed guidelines to use in determining if a community is ready to incorporate. The guidelines include criteria for considering the population and measuring the administrative and program delivery capabilities of a community. A municipal development consultant can also help the community determine if they are ready for incorporation.

Is there a formal process for community incorporation?

There is a formal process. A complete discussion of community incorporation is available from ANA in a publication called *Managing Your Own Affairs*. This publication has recently been revised to reflect the redraft of *The Northern Affairs Act* now in effect. The section of this publication called Information About Community Incorporation will help you decide if your community should incorporate and answer most of your questions about the process involved. Ask the ANA municipal development consultant for your community to help you find the most current information.



Rhonda Head (second from left) joins local dignitaries at ribbon cutting.

The Pas Welcomes New Canadian Red Cross Office

On December 13, 2006, the Manitoba Region of the Canadian Red Cross opened their new office in The Pas, Manitoba. But before Rhonda Head, their new Northern Manitoba co-ordinator, participated in the office ribbon cutting ceremony, she had already been working behind the scenes for several weeks. In fact, she had already introduced a number of northern communities to key Red Cross programs such as First Aid, Water Safety, RespectED: Violence and Abuse Prevention, and injury prevention programs including babysitting and storm preparedness courses.

Rhonda Head was born and raised in The Pas and has family members living on the Opaskwayak Cree Nation (OCN). Her professional experience includes working as opening ceremonies and communications co-ordinator for the 2002 North American Indigenous Games and also as a communications officer for OCN. Her familiarity with the north is a considerable benefit to her when it comes to making new northern connections for the Red Cross. She is as passionate about serving Northern Manitoba people as she is about using the North's opportunities and overcoming its challenges.

"The Canadian Red Cross is an impressive national organization that offers a diverse mix of proven programs that help the most vulnerable. The Red Cross helps educate people on how to make

their communities safer and healthier places to live," says Head. "I am thrilled to be a part of this remarkable organization and to be able to offer Red Cross programs and services to the people of Northern Manitoba."

The Canadian Red Cross has identified disaster management as one of its top priorities

One of her priorities in the coming months will be recruiting volunteers for the Red Cross Disaster Management Team. The Canadian Red Cross has identified disaster management as one of its top priorities. In the event of a disaster in Northern Manitoba, the Red Cross will respond with a team of trained volunteers prepared to help the community.

The new office in The Pas is an example of renewed Red Cross commitment in Northern Manitoba. The organization already has a First Aid and Water Safety co-ordinator based in Thompson and serving surrounding

communities. They are currently recruiting a co-ordinator to operate a new office in Thompson, as well.

If you would like to contact Rhonda Head, call her at 204-623-4780 or e-mail her at rhonda.head@redcross.ca. Learn more about the Canadian Red Cross and watch for new program announcements in the Manitoba Region by visiting www.redcross.ca/manitoba on the Internet.

Community Public Works EMPLOYEE WORKSHOP REVIEW

Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) recently held community public works employee workshops in Selkirk and Thompson, Manitoba. These workshops are essential in providing communities and their public works employees with current training and valuable information related to their work.

In Selkirk, the North Central Region workshop was held January 9 to 11, 2007. ANA addressed work-related needs with the following training and information sessions:

- o chemical pump maintenance
- o pump maintenance
- o proper water sampling protocols
- o waste disposal site regulations, operations and recycling
- o responsibilities and duties of a public works employee
- o infrastructure audits
- o water treatment plant regulations
- o Work Place Safety and Health (WPSH) regulations
- o professional development day (report writing, communications)

Thompson's Northern Region workshop took place January 30 to February 1, 2007 and included the following topics:

- o responsibilities and duties of a public works employee
- o Work Place Safety and Health (WPSH) regulations
- o mechanical/electrical proponent and maintenance terminology
- o chemical pump maintenance demonstration
- o pump maintenance demonstration
- o infrastructure audits
- o professional development day (report writing, communications)
- o common pipe terminology and identification
- o blueprint interpretation exercise (case study)
- o inventory audits
- o tool requirements/requests to council exercise
- o emergency chlorination procedures
- o Manitoba Hydro Power Smart incentives
- o emergency water main repair
- o meeting the new drinking water regulations



Public works employees view a demonstration of a repair procedure on water treatment equipment.

ANA technical staff incorporated hands-on exercises in workshops to help make the training more memorable and to give public works employees practice with different aspects of topics presented. Instructors and presenters from various government departments were joined by local industry representatives who provided equipment and examples of situations that community public works employees deal with every day.

ANA thanks all participants for their contributions to these successful workshops. Contact the technical and public works consultant for your region if you have ideas, questions or suggestions that may help make future workshops even more successful.



Left to Right: Garry Nabess, Armand Barbeau, Faron Cook, Eric Ducharme, Laurie Maynard, Crystal Dumas, Albert Sandberg, Honourable Oscar Lathlin, Robert Barbeau, Ariene Morrisseau and Chris Tyrrell.

Responsibilities and Duties of a Public Works Employee

Public works employees in ANA communities are often expected to be a jack of all trades. They are involved in many aspects of operating their communities and the work can range from routine to demanding, physically and mentally. A single day could mean everything from repairing a broken window to acting as a supervisor for summer employment students. It is not uncommon for public works employees to act as backups to other jobs in the community. In some communities, the public works employee serves as the assistant or backup to the water treatment plant operator. Because of the diverse nature of their job, the public works employee is a valuable asset to a community.

Many public works employee duties can be grouped under three broad categories:

Building and equipment maintenance:

- o general building maintenance (cleaning, changing lights, inspections)
- o snow removal from all doors, stairs and driveways of public buildings and fire halls
- o inspecting buildings for damage and repairing as necessary
- o keeping council notified in writing about any needed repairs to buildings, equipment, vehicles and other community assets
- o reading hydro meters on all community owned buildings
- o proper storage and maintenance of

community summer and winter equipment

- o maintaining log books for all equipment used in day to day operations
- o ensuring all equipment is serviced according to user manuals
- o allowing only trained, properly licensed personnel to operate community equipment and facilities
- o following all Workplace Safety and Health guidelines

Water and wastewater facilities:

- o taking daily water tests and recording data
- o conducting a daily system check and report in writing any problems to council and ANA
- o preparing chlorine solutions, backwashing and replacing filters according to provincial regulations
- o ensuring all thermostats are set properly and in working order
- o reporting to council any heat or power loss and taking action to prevent freezing damage to water treatment system components
- o taking water samples and sending them to the appropriate agency for analysis
- o keeping knowledge current and staying properly certified by participating in ongoing training
- o maintaining detailed records of work done, problems encountered and solutions applied.
- o ensuring facilities are secured with locks

Recreation facilities, roads and waste disposal sites:

- o keeping all recreation and playground equipment in safe working condition
- o maintaining any community gardens, raking and cutting grass, cleaning up debris and garbage
- o reporting to council on the condition of community roads and whether repair or maintenance is required
- o keeping monthly maintenance logs for council
- o providing garbage collection services as outlined by community council
- o maintaining local waste disposal site and adhering to regulations regarding burning of garbage, types of waste accepted and the segregation of scrap metal and other recyclables from general refuse
- o operating and maintaining the waste disposal site and equipment used at the site

These are just some of the many duties carried out by a community public works employee. While the maintenance and repair aspects of the position are important, it is equally important to prepare various written reports for council, ensure logbooks on buildings and equipment are maintained and follow all applicable regulatory guidelines. The work is ongoing and essential. A public works employee who receives proper community support and training is in the best position to continue contributing to the success of the community.

ANA Employee Recognition Program Awards Presented

The Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) Employee Recognition Program selection committee reviewed nominations submitted for the 2007 Quality Service Award of Excellence. Awards were presented at the divisional planning workshop held in The Pas February 28 to March 2, 2007.

Service Excellence Team Category:

ANA Local Government Development Division, emergency response team – Red Deer Lake flood: Hessel Dethmers, Eric Ducharme, Laurie Maynard, Faron Cook, Armand Barbeau, Wayne Preston, Garry Nabess, Albert Sandberg, Robert Barbeau,

Stewart Sabiston, Don Michalyk and Jim Perchaluk

ANA Local Government Development Division, emergency response team – Waterhen flood: Eric Ducharme, Laurie Maynard, Crystal Dumas, Chris Tyrrell, Robert Barbeau, Stewart Sabiston and Jim Perchaluk

Service Excellence Individual Category:

Arlene Morrisseau, Financial and Administrative Services Division

Congratulations for commitment and hard work over the past year are well-deserved.

PROFILE

Over the past year, Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs has seen several changes in personnel. We said goodbye to several long term employees well known in our communities, among them were Marilyn Duval, executive director, Val Stephenson, assistant to the executive director, and Jim Perchaluk, north central regional director. We also saw Karen Barker, regional director for the northern region move to our Dauphin office to be the north central regional director.

Freda Albert took over as executive director in October 2006. Freda worked in Thompson for the department prior to 1994 as the local government services co-ordinator, a position known today as municipal development consultant. Originally from Norway House, Freda was employed by the Assembly of First Nations, Manitoba Region and Norway House Cree Nation as their executive director from 1994 to 2006.

Freda has served as a member of the Norway House Cree Nation team that helped to develop several local projects including a multimillion dollar school, a hotel, a day care centre, administration offices, cellular phone

service, emergency ambulance service and several viable businesses. Freda is a mother of two daughters and a son, all of whom have graduated from school and are now working and raising families of their own. Freda has four granddaughters and one grandson, so far.

Joining Freda in January as assistant to the executive director is Jean Merasty. Born and raised in Brochet, Jean is a member of the Barren Lands First Nation. A mother of three girls and a son, Jean is also a proud grandmother of four beautiful grandchildren.

Jean moved to Thompson in 1986 to further her education and received a diploma in Business Administration with honours and a certificate in Business Skills Integrated from Keewatin Community College. Jean is presently studying part-time to obtain a Bachelor of Management degree from Athabasca University.

Jean was previously employed with the Keewatin Tribal Council as property manager for the Urban Native Housing Program, office manager with NorMan Regional Development and administrative assistant with University College of the North.



Freda Albert



Jean Merasty

Community Contact

Paul Doolan, editor
1680 Ellice Avenue, Bay 8
Winnipeg, MB R3H 0Z2
Ph: 204-945-2161
Toll-free: 1-800-282-8069
Fax: 204-948-2389
E-mail: paul.doolan@gov.mb.ca
www.gov.mb.ca/ana

Community Council members, community residents and departmental staff are strongly encouraged to submit feedback, comments, questions, suggestions and ideas to the editor.